

Message Text

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E. O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: CVIS, BTRA, UR, US

SUBJ: MULTIPLE ENTRY/EXIT VISAS FOR US BUSINESSMEN

REF: STATE 282302

1. WHILE EMBASSY SHARES DEPARTMENT'S VIEW THAT WE SHOULD GENERALLY SEEK TO FOLLOW PRINCIPLE OF RECIPROCITY IN VISA MATTERS WITH SOVIETS, WE DO NOT BELIEVE THAT PROPOSAL REFTEL ON MULTIPLE ENTRY/EXIT VISAS WOULD BE PRACTICAL OR WOULD BE SEEN BY SOVIETS AS SATISFYING PRINCIPLE OF RECIPROCITY. MOREOVER, EMBASSY SERIOUSLY QUESTIONS ADVISABILITY OF GOING TO SOVIETS WITH PROPOSAL WHICH REPRESENTS SUCH A SHARP STEP BACKWARD FROM OUR ORIGINAL PROPOSAL OF FEBRUARY 1, 1973, THAT ALL US BUSINESSMEN IN MOSCOW AND THEIR SOVIET COUNTERPARTS IN U.S. BE GIVEN MULTIPLE VISAS. IN ITS RESPONSE (STATE 53476 OF MARCH 23, 1973) TO SOVIET COUNTER-PROPOSAL OF MARCH 16, 1973, THAT MULTIPLE ENTRY/EXIT VISAS BE GIVEN ONLY TO HEADS OF BUSINESS OFFICES, DEPARTMENT NOTED THAT WHILE SOVIET PROPOSAL WAS CLEARLY IN OUR INTEREST, WE STILL PREFER OUR ORIGINAL PROPOSAL (I.E. MULTIPLE ENTRY/EXIT VISAS FOR ALL MEMBERS OF BUSINESS OFFICE STAFFS).

2. AT PRESENT, 21 U.S. BUSINESSMEN HAVE RECEIVED SOVIET MULTIPLE ENTRY/EXIT VISAS. (THIS FIGURE INCLUDES REPRESENTATIVES OF THREE BANKS, AMEXCO, AND TRADE/ECONOMIC COUNCIL BUT EXCLUDES
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PANAM REPS (ALL THREE OF WHOM HAVE MULTIPLE ENTRY/EXIT VISAS)

SINCE EMBASSY UNDERSTANDS THAT SPECIAL ARRANGEMENTS WERE MADE FOR PANAM AND AEROFLOT VISAS.) IN ADDITION TO 21 BUSINESSMEN WHO HAVE MULTIPLE ENTRY/EXIT VISAS, THERE ARE 8 DEPUTY REPRESENTATIVES CURRENTLY IN MOSCOW (DOW CHEMICAL, GENERAL ELECTRIC, IBM, HEWLETT-PACKARD, OXY, PULLMAN (TWO) AND TRADE/ECONOMIC COUNCIL) WHO HAVE NOT RECEIVED MULTIPLE ENTRY/EXIT VISAS. IN RESPONSE TO REQUESTS FOR MULTIPLE ENTRY/EXIT VISAS BY IBM, DOW, PULLMAN AND OTHERS, SOVIETS HAVE CLAIMED THAT THEY ARE ALREADY ON SHORT END OF DEAL IN VIEW FACT THAT ONLY 6 SOVIETS AT AMTORG, KAMA PURCHASING COMMISSION AND TRADE COUNCIL'S NEW YORK OFFICE HAVE U.S. MULTIPLE ENTRY VISAS. AS FAR AS SOVIETS ARE CONCERNED, WE ARE 15 POINTS AHEAD IN THIS GAME.

3. ALSO, US-USSR VISA RECIPROCITY IS BECOMING INCREASINGLY COMPLICATED, PARTICULARLY IN RESIDENT BUSINESSMAN/COMMERCIAL OFFICIAL AREA. RECIPROCITY INVOLVES NOT JUST ISSUE OF MULTIPLE VS SINGLE-VALIDITY, BUT ALSO OTHER QUESTIONS: (A) VISA CATEGORIES - US SYSTEM, WITH CATEGORIES A, L AND B, IS MORE COMPLICATED; PERSONS WITH LATTER CATEGORY CAN BE ADMITTED ONLY SIX MONTHS AT ONE TIME AND MUST APPLY FOR EXTENSIONS OF STAY; (B) VISA PETITIONS - ONLY US HAS THAT PROCEDURE, AND WHILE IT APPLIES TO FEW SOVIETS WE NOTE THAT IN ONE RECENT CASE PETITION PROCEDURE DELAYED ISSUANCE THREE MONTHS (ENRIKO DZHASI OF INTOURIST - SEE STATE 267806 AND PREVIOUS); (C) EXIT VISA REQUIREMENT - ONLY SOVIET SIDE HAS THAT REQUIREMENT. IMPLEMENTATION OF RECIPROCITY AT WORKING LEVEL IN DAY-TO-DAY VISA ISSUANCE IS BECOMING ALMOST UNWORKABLY COMPLEX, AND THE TWO-TIER SYSTEM ENVISIONED REFTTEL WOULD ADD TO THE CONFUSION, PARTICULARLY AS INCUMBENTS ARE REPLACED. ACROSS-THE-BOARD RECIPROCAL ISSUANCE OF MULTIPLE VISAS FOR BUSINESSMEN AND COMMERCIAL REPRESENTATIVES WOULD MAKE SYSTEM MORE WORKABLE.

4. ACCORDING TO LATEST INFORMATION AVAILABLE TO EMBASSY (STATE 274816), THERE ARE CURRENTLY 78 SOVIETS AT AMTORG, KAMA PURCHASING AND TRADE/ECONOMIC COUNCIL WHO HAVE ONLY SINGLE-ENTRY VISAS. WERE THESE INDIVIDUALS TO BE GIVEN MULTIPLE-ENTRY VISAS, THIS WOULD BRING NUMBER OF SOVIETS AT THOSE ORGANIZATIONS WITH MULTIPLE-ENTRY VISAS TO 84. AS NOTED ABOVE, THERE ARE NOW 21 U.S. BUSINESSMEN IN MOSCOW WITH MULTIPLE ENTRY/EXIT VISAS PLUS ANOTHER 8 WHO HAVE APPLIED, FOR A TOTAL

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OF 29. HOWEVER, ON BASIS DISCUSSIONS WITH COMPANY REPRESENTATIVES, COMMERCAIL OFFICE ANTICIPATES THAT THIS NUMBER WILL INCREASE TO 40/45 RANGE SHORTLY PROVIDED HOUSING SITUATION IMPROVES. WHILE THIS WOULD STILL LEAVE US SHORT OF SOVIET FIGURE, EMBASSY BELIEVES FURTHER GROWTH IN U.S. BUSINESS COMMUNITY, COUPLED WITH FACT THAT SOVIETS HAVE NOW REACHED TOP OF THEIR CEILINGS IN U.S., MEANS THAT NUMBERS MORE NEARLY

IN BALANCE LIKELY TO BE ACHIEVED IN RELATIVELY BRIEF PERIOD,
PERHAPS 18 MONTHS.

5. ON BASIS OF ABOVE, EMBASSY BELIEVES ARGUMENTS CLEARLY
FAVORS REITERATION OF OUR ORIGINAL PROPOSAL FOR ACROSS-THE-
BOARD SOLUTION AND URGES THAT DEPARTMENT TAKE ANOTHER LOOK
AT QUESTION.
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